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## CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

A TRIANGULAR DEBATE, BEFORE THE NINETEENTH  
CENTURY CLUB OF NEW YORK.

THE Right Reverend Mr. J. M. THOBURN, Missionary Bishop to  
India and Malaysia, said :<sup>1</sup>

Most of the opinions formed with regard to missions, as far as India is concerned, are very superficial, and you have to bear in mind that no person can form an intelligent opinion on them unless he has been there himself and seen the work more than once.

If you go to India, a country as large as all the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, and a country like Europe, made up of many different nationalities, speaking languages differing very much in character ; and some one who has happened to have as a servant a Christian convert, tells you that the missions are not worth much, that a convert is a great deal worse after baptism than he was before ; that it does not mean anything there to be a Christian convert, you must distinguish between the converts of the real missions of India and the lineal descendants of the people who were Chris-

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walter H. Page, President of the Nineteenth Century Club, writes of Bishop Thoburn : " Remarkable success has crowned the mission work in his charge. He has organised many churches even as far away as Rangoon and Singapore. During the last few years converts have been received into his churches at the rate of about fifteen hundred a month, or fifty for every day of the year. The work of providing for this large number of converts, furnishing the necessary teachers and building up the churches, is sufficient to tax all his energies. He has written several books, notable among which are *My Missionary Apprenticeship* and *India and Malaysia*." As Bishop Thoburn sailed for India on the next day after the debate he has been unable to read the proofs of his address, which has been condensed from a stenographic report.

tianised by force about two and a half centuries ago. There are in India over two hundred thousand of such Christians, but we never reckon them as converts. The French and Dutch, and especially the Portuguese compelled people to become Christians, but that is not missionary work at all.

When the English government first assumed power in India they refused to let missions be introduced, which, though eminently discreditable to their courage, was a fortunate thing, for if they had introduced missions themselves they would have been badly mismanaged. As the union of Church and State is fatal anywhere in Christendom, it is especially fatal in a heathen land ; and you would have had the extraordinary spectacle of Warren Hastings and Lord Clive trying to convert the people of India. They would have made them Christians indeed ! And then you would have had a great deal to say as to what Christianity does for the heathen.

The missionary enterprise which I have devoted myself to, a work which I always thought has not been sufficiently valued, and perhaps not correctly estimated, began about one hundred years ago. A shoemaker named William Carey was the first great leader of the movement, which required one generation to get it fairly under way, and consequently, when you come to look at the situation you will find that we only have about two generations of missionary labor upon which to pass an opinion.

Numerically we have not succeeded as well, I think, as the Christians of the first century did. I think, although there is a good deal of guess in it, Renan's estimate was that, at the close of the first century there were probably not more than two hundred or three hundred thousand people Christians in the world, and the best authorities of the present day put the number surprisingly low. We have between six and seven hundred thousand at the present day in India. It will be said that they are not visible to those that go there ; and they are often spoken of very contemptuously and by none more contemptuously than by cultivated, educated Indians themselves. You will be told that they are all low-caste, all ignorant, all very poor, that they have no influence, and never can have any influence. Please remember that, at the end of the first cen-

ture, there were only about half a dozen really able leaders of the Christian Church whose names have come down to us, and I am not sure but I have put the number rather high. At that time you could not have found five men of thought in the Roman Empire who could have told the name of the founder of Christianity. They did not know in Rome the difference between a Jew and a Christian, and the distinction was not known to most of the rulers of the Empire. We always imagine that the early Christians had been great men. There were among them not many; and the constant reproach of the day was that the great mass of the Christians were slaves.

Now, in the first place, the majority of our Christians in the missions I am superintending are composed of very poor people, and of low-caste people; and when that is brought forward as an objection, my reply is: That is accounted for by the fact that we are Christians. It is Christianity that we are planting there. If we had not the poor, and if we had not the outcasts, then you might intimate to me that I was not a Christian, and that we are not planting Christianity there, but Mohammedanism or some other cult. When the Founder of Christianity came, you will remember that he announced from the first that he came "with good tidings to the poor." You never saw a poor man. The poorest tramps that I meet on the street here, would be swells in India. We are receiving converts at the present time at the rate of about fifty every day. While you are sleeping to-night our missionaries in India will receive fifty converts to Christianity; and I suppose forty-nine of them will be so poor that the average income of each family would not amount to six or seven cents a day; and that is what it will be all through life.

The question will be asked: What can these poor people do? The question is, not what can they do, but what can *we* do?

In the first place, we are going to enrich them. The trouble with the extremely poor people is that poverty can be accounted for only in one way. It is owing to moral causes. We cannot find gold mines for the poor, but if we stamp the right kind of character into them they begin to rise.

It will be said : "You cannot make men out of those degraded people." Well, did you ever try? I have, and I say, do not despise them. I remember one time, it was in 1868, when I went out to a station to administer the Lord's Supper in a village. A great many of the converts were thieves, and the caste they belonged to consisted largely of professional thieves. Stealing is looked upon in this country as a base and gross sin, unless it is done in legal form ; but out there it is looked on otherwise ; and when I saw these poor people, the thought came to me : We can never build up Christianity here, when the foundation must rest on thieves and criminals. It did not occur to me at the time that when our Saviour died, there was a thief on his right hand and one on his left.

I have lived to lay my hands upon two of those men and ordain them as ministers of Christ. Forty-five hundred of them, who have become Christians, are so elevated that their neighbors have forgotten that they were ever anything else but Christians. One of them, who was the son of a sweeper,—Mr. Gandhi knows what that means ; there is no depth deeper than that,—I have seen that man coaching Burmese and Mahomedan young men and boys for university examinations. He is now the principal of a high school, and I have seen men educated by him taking responsible positions. Therefore, I know that these people *can* rise.

There are fifty millions of people in India who are what we call "low caste"; they are below the line of social respectability; they have no more chance than the colored people in South Carolina have in the white schools of the country. Although the law professes to admit all on equal terms, they cannot go to an ordinary school. In a remarkable article I was permitted to read, on the Common Schools of India, written by an Indian gentleman of education, he says : "Nothing can be done for these people, unless the missionaries do it," and he admits what they have been doing for them.

Those are the people among whom we work. Missionaries are opening out a doorway, and they are coming in. We have brought the cost down cheaper and cheaper, until now I will take ten boys or ten girls who are baptised, and I will put them in a boarding-

school, clothe them and feed them and educate them for the sum of ten dollars a year for each one. Is there anything cheaper in the world? And they will be better off than ever before.

Another word with regard to women. A woman's intellect has always been regarded as exactly the same as the intellect of an out-cast. The low-caste man is not supposed to have an intellect, neither are women supposed to have one; consequently they never have any opportunities. And I don't see how there can be any opportunities under the Hindu system. There would be a better chance for them if the Hindus were Buddhists, but we have no Buddhists in India now. Missionaries introduced the education of women in India, and have done it successfully.

It is my own deliberate opinion that, before the middle of the next century, the world generally will recognise the missionary movement as the greatest movement of the world.

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MR. VIRCHAND R. GANDHI<sup>1</sup> said :

When I say anything against Christian missions, please understand that I do not refer to Bishop Thoburn, whom I regard with great respect and friendly sympathy. There is nothing personal in my remarks at all.

Christian missions to India imply that India is a land of heathens, and, therefore, stands on the same level with the Andaman or the Fiji Islands. That a country which has been recognised in all ages the world over as the mother of all religions and the cradle of civilisation should be considered as pagan, shows how much ignorance prevails in Christendom.

Since the Parliament of Religions, I have been studying Christian institutions, and I have also studied the way in which the Christian ministers and the missionaries are manufactured in this country, and have learned to pity them. We must not blame them

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Virchand R. Gandhi, a barrister of Bombay, came to the United States to attend the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair in 1893, as a representative of Jainism, a faith older than Buddhism, similar to it in its ethics, but different from it in its psychology, and professed by several millions of India's most peaceful and law-abiding citizens.

too severely, because their education is too narrow to make them broad-minded. I grant that they are good-hearted, that they are good husbands and often fathers of large families, but generally they are very ignorant, especially of the history of civilisation and of the philosophy of religion of India. Most of them do not even know the history of ancient India.

We know that in this age of competition, centralisation, and monopoly, very many people are forced out of business. The English say, "The fool of the family goes into the Church"; so that when a youth is unable to make a living, he takes to missionary work, goes to India, and helps to introduce among the Hindus the doctrines of his church, which have long since been exploded by science.

When I arrived in this country, I first came to know from missionary sources that in India women threw their babies into the Ganges, and that the people of India threw themselves under the car of Juggernaut. No one ever invented a more barefaced falsehood or more malicious slander. Listen to the following hymn, which is quoted from *Songs for the Little Ones at Home* :

" See that heathen mother stand  
Where the sacred current flows ;  
With her own maternal hand  
Mid the waves her babe she throws.  
  
Hark ! I hear the piteous scream ;  
Frightful monsters seize their prey,  
Or the dark and bloody stream  
Bears the struggling child away.  
  
Fainter now, and fainter still,  
Breaks the cry upon the ear ;  
But the mother's heart is steel  
She unmoved that cry can hear.  
  
Send, O send the Bible there,  
Let its precepts reach the heart ;  
She may then her children spare—  
Act the mother's tender part."

The song is illustrated by a picture which heightens the horrible effect, and there are several other songs written in the same

spirit.<sup>1</sup> Such heart-rending stories help to swell the collections. We read in the same hymn-book, on page 246 :

"Both missions and schools want money, I know."

And another song starts with these words :

"Should you wish to be told the best use of a penny,  
I'll tell you a way that is better than any."

We all understand that the debasement of a nation's coinage is very pernicious and must prove disastrous to its commerce. How much more dangerous is the debasement of the spiritual coinage ! All religions worthy of the name are now making great efforts to purify their doctrines and return to their original standpoint,—all except Christianity ! You surely know that the nineteenth century Christianity is not the religion taught by Christ. Christ's religion has been changed and corrupted. But Christian clergymen are well aware that if they were to attempt to purify Christianity and bring it back to the religion of Christ, the result would be to reform it out of existence. Christianity stands to-day completely explained. Every step in its development is laid bare and shown to be due to purely natural causes, and it is easy to see how much Christianity adopted from other and older religions.

The central ideas of Christianity—an angry God and vicarious atonement—are contrary to every fact in nature, as also to the better aspirations of the human heart ; they are, in our present stage of enlightenment, absurd, preposterous, and blasphemous propositions. Christians well know that the much-decorated statue of the Church, as it now stands, is not of pure chiseled marble, but of clay, cemented

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<sup>1</sup>In reply to Mr. Gandhi's statement on infanticide in India the Bishop said : "That verse from the hymn that was read about the mother who throws her child into the Ganges has a little history. When missionaries went over first, a hundred years ago, the mothers *did* throw their children into the *lower Ganges* ; but never did throw them into the upper parts of the stream. I have frequently corrected that mistake, and told them that they no longer throw their children into the Ganges now. Unfortunately for Mr. Gandhi, there is an English law which prohibits throwing children into the Ganges. Would that law have been made if it had never been done ? "

Mr. Gandhi maintains that it is only a missionary calumny to excite the sympathy of credulous Christians ; he says that he has studied the whole criminal law of India but it does not in any place refer to the throwing of babies into the Ganges ; because there *never was* such a custom at any time in the history of India.



together by blood and tears and hardened in the fires of hatred and persecution. And still we hear the cry, "The whole world for Christ."

What benefit have the Hindus derived from their contact with Christian nations? The idea generally prevalent in this country about the morality and truthfulness of the Hindus evidently has been very low. Such seeds of enmity and hatred have been sown by the missionaries that it would be an almost Herculean task to establish better relations between India and America, had it not been for the Parliament of Religions and the spread of liberal thought from its platform.

If we examine Greek, Chinese, Persian, or Arabian writings on the Hindus, before foreigners invaded India, we find an impartial description of their national character. Megasthenes, the famous Greek ambassador, praises them for their love of truth and justice, for the absence of slavery, and for the chastity of their women. Arrian, in the second century, Hiouen-thsang, the famous Buddhist pilgrim in the seventh century Marco Polo, in the thirteenth century, have written in highest terms of praise of Hindu morality. The literature and philosophy of Ancient India have excited the admiration of all scholars, except Christian missionaries. Max Müller has said :

"If I were asked under what sky the human mind has developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India."

The wonder is that notwithstanding these foreign attacks and the demoralising influences of foreigners, India and her people have survived : India still leads in spirituality and morality. Sir T. Monroe says :

"If a good system of agriculture, unrivaled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to either convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect, and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilised people—then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilisation is to become an article of trade between England and India, I am convinced that England will gain by the import cargo."

Under the reign of the King of Oudh, there was not one liquor

shop in all Lucknow ; now, under the rule of Christian Government, there are more than a hundred. In the year 1890-1891 the English Government derived 4,947,780 rupees from the liquor traffic—a revenue three or four times larger than that derived either from customs or assessed taxes, or forests, or registrations, or Post Office, and seven times as large as telegraphs, eight times as large as from law and justice. The income is increasing every year by five hundred thousand dollars. Fifteen years ago only ten per cent. of the people of India drank spirits, now over twenty per cent. To our rulers then, who represent to us political Christianity, money, howsoever obtained, is the highest Gospel, and certainly Christianity is responsible for all this because the first representatives of Christianity sanctioned the use of wine under the pretext of a religious ceremony. Drinking is, in fact, an inseparable feature of Christianity as understood by the low-class people who are perverted to Christianity. This is one of the vices which Christianity is forcing on us ; and you will be startled when I tell you that even the missionaries have administered intoxicants to make conversion more easy and sure. Perversion always precedes conversion.

I make this statement not upon my own authority but on the authority of one of your own countrymen of high standing who has lived for years among missionaries in India and has been an eye-witness to such diabolical methods. And these men speak of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, the universal love and liberality of thought.

Even aside from these practices of the missionaries, the teachings propagated among the most ignorant of the low classes is at best a dogma of one or other particular sect.<sup>1</sup> Missionaries preach doctrines that they dare no longer teach in the public schools of this country. They expect us to permit our children to accept that

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Thoburn said in reply to this passage : " I am not aware that I teach or that others teach those poor creatures dogmas. My friend was brought up in India, but he hasn't lived quite as many years in it as I have ; and I have been among those people. They don't know anything about dogma. We do not receive them into our schools to make them Christians. They come into our schools because their parents are converts. Nobody else in this world will ever give them this education unless we do."

which you would not allow to be taught to your own children. We cannot see the consistency of such a method. The American people spend thousands of dollars to propagate the doctrines of the fall of man, the creation of the world out of nothing in six days by a personal God, vicarious atonement, absolution from sin by the shedding of innocent blood. This is the Christianity offered to the poor and illiterate of India.

Christianity does not come alone ; nor does it come directly from Jesus Christ ; it comes to us through its modern representatives, who have introduced many vices into India, unknown to the Hindus. It has percolated through the layers of dogmatism and bigotry, of intolerance and superstition, of damnation and hell fire. It takes on itself the quality of these layers and imparts them to those that are received within its folds.

We in India, from the lowest pariah to the highest potentate, look upon life here as a mere waiting room from the known to the unknown, as a mere stage of growth from the lowest animalcule to the highest and perfected state. We believe in the eternity of the soul, meaning thereby that it is eternal at both ends—at the beginning as well as at the end ; we preach and practice brotherhood—not only of man but of all living beings—not on Sundays only but on all the days of the week. We believe in the law of universal justice—that our present condition is the result of our past actions and that we are not subjected to the freaks of an irresponsible governor, who is prosecutor and judge at the same time ; we depend for our salvation on our own acts and deeds and not on the sacrificial death of an attorney. Our rites and ceremonies may appear to you as mere superstitions but modern science is just beginning to understand that they are based on scientific principles.

My missionary friends say they are educating the people of India. I ask them with what object. It is only a bait offered for the purpose of catching the Hindu fish in the Christian net. Bishop Thoburn in his work on India honestly admits that stratagem had to be resorted to in order to attract children to the secular and Sunday schools ; and he mentions how successful the missionaries were in establishing a dozen Sunday schools in Lucknow in 1877, omitting,

however, to mention that before that time there was not one drinking-saloon in that city, while now there are more than a hundred. Bishop Thoburn is doing his best to make converts, but every convert he makes is transmuted from an industrious worker into an idle loafer, who becomes a burden on the missionary funds.

My brothers and sisters of America, there is not the least shadow of hope that India can ever be Christianised. After two hundred years of vain efforts and of spending millions of dollars with the prestige of the conqueror and backed by British bayonets, Christianity is not supported by the converts themselves. Every bit of Protestant Christianity in India is maintained partly by the money flowing from England and America, and partly by taxes imposed upon the Hindus against their will, which must be paid although the people starve.

The people of India as a whole are saturated with religious and philosophical thought. They think and ponder on spiritual matters from childhood to death. Even the street-sweeper is frequently more profoundly versed in subtle metaphysics and divine wisdom than the missionary sent to convert him.

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DR. PAUL CARUS said :

This is a truly interesting conflict, in which two men of different creeds are pitted against one another: the disputants, Mr. Gandhi, the Jain and so-called pagan, and the Right Rev. Mr. Thoburn, a Christian bishop, are the exponents of two incompatible world-conceptions. Their controversy is no mere tournament, but genuine war, and to those who understand the situation it is more exciting than a duel; for the battle is not between persons but between principles. Think only of the conflict back of it, which is more thrilling than a Mexican bull-fight, for there is more at stake than the worthless life of a bullying matadore. It is a struggle for life and death between two hostile religions; and every religion implies a peculiar civilisation, with its own moral ideals and methods of education, including all the possibilities of a higher development in a definite direction. The religion of a man is the core of his being, for it is the ultimate determinant of his actions. Mr. Gandhi

and Bishop Thoburn fight, not for sport, not for honor, not even for their lives, but for their souls.

How untrue is that sentence which Schiller puts into the mouth of Wallenstein :

“ Ideas live in happy peace together,  
While fiercely in space bodies collide.”<sup>1</sup>

It is true enough that bodies do collide, but space is infinite, and there is room enough in it to accommodate all bodies in peaceful juxtaposition. Whenever a collision takes place, apparently other factors are active than material extension. Tables or chairs that stand in our way do not mind being pushed aside ; any other place will suit them just as well ; but ideas are not so obliging. No affirmation can remain at ease so long as its negation exists, and no infinity is large enough to harbor Yea and Nay at once. Thus we should rather say :

“ Bodies may dwell in happy peace together,  
While fiercely ideas wage their wars.”

Ideas are, after all, the decisive factors in the great battle of life, and ideas are harder than stone or steel. They appear as fleeting ghosts without reality, and are, in the opinion of the materialist, unsubstantial humbugs. But a close inspection shows that these wonderful quiddities are the essence of existence. Ideas are the God who, through a long and painful process of evolution, becomes flesh in man, and reveals himself in the human soul. They reach their clearest expression in exact science and are as exclusive and intolerant as the old Jehovah who suffers no gods beside him.

I come as an umpire into this conflict, for I side with neither party. I am a man of science without a creed, repudiating on the one hand the very possibility of any special and extra-natural reve-

<sup>1</sup> Wallenstein says (Act II, Scene 2):

“ Leicht bei einander wohnen die Gedanken,  
Doch hart im Raume stossen sich die Sachen.”

We need not add that Wallenstein, of course, is right when the word “ ideas ” means all possible and impossible fancies. The realm of imagination is infinite, and he can truly say :

“ Eng ist die Welt und das Gehirn ist weit.”  
[The world is narrow, and the brain is broad.]

lation, and on the other hand always ready to accept what can be proved to be true, either through experimental demonstration or on the ground of soundly reasoned argument. But while I have no creed, I have a religion. My religion is a trust in truth. I propose to make truth the essence of our souls, meaning by truth the same as the scientist,—“a correct representation of facts”; and truth, as experience teaches us, must be established by our own exertions, after a careful examination and with rigorous criticism : it must be established by science.

By science I do not mean merely the dry formulas of the scientist, but the truth which they contain, and religion is the best knowledge of truth attainable, applied to moral conduct. Nothing more holy than truth ! Genuine religion is solidary with science, and a religion that scorns science is doomed. Science is the light on our path ; science is God’s revelation ; and science alone, i. e., truth to be verified by science, is the saviour from whom we can expect help and comfort.

In entering the lists as a third party, I do not consider myself called upon to investigate the personal accusations and counter-accusations made to-night. They may be true or they may be false ; I do not care. No doubt mistakes are made by missionaries, and the so-called pagans are probably a little less ideal than Mr. Gandhi would make us believe. Missionaries, and Jains also, are mortals, like ourselves, and who among us is free from error and sin ? What I care for are not the details but the principle of missionarising. I ask :

“Is a religious propaganda right or not ? Is it presumptuous to intrude our religion on other people, or is it a sacred duty to do so ?”

My opinion is in brief this, that missionarising is the inevitable outcome of a serious conviction. Truth is like a burning torch. It must shine, and you cannot hide it under a bushel. That religion is dead whose adherents have no desire to propagate their faith. He who would find fault with the principle of missionarising must foster indifferentism, which is not impartiality, but lack of conviction.

We cannot agree with Schopenhauer when he calls missions

"the acme of obtrusiveness, arrogance, and impertinence," but we are pleased with his proposition that Buddhists and Brahmans should be allowed to send as many missionaries of their own to Christian countries as Christians send missionaries to theirs.<sup>1</sup> And we do not doubt that the execution of this plan would be mutually beneficial. Missionaries from what we call pagan countries would set us a-thinking. Their presence would be as suggestive and instructive as the World's Parliament of Religions. And if they did not convert us to their faith, they would most certainly help us to broaden our views and to attain a higher, a purer, and a truer conception of our own religion.

Competition may be inconvenient, but it is good, even in matters spiritual, for it promotes progress. Christians who denounce the Parliament of Religions prove only the littleness of their faith. There is something wrong in either the views or the policy of those who claim that their religion is too holy for comparison and criticism. It is the brass of glittering imitations only that haughtily denounces tests as improper, not the genuine gold of truth.

Many of Mr. Gandhi's propositions find a strong support among prominent men in Europe and America; missions to India and China are frequently spoken of as utter failures. Bishop Thoburn admits that "the Indian converts of the century now closing are regarded with a measure of contempt by many intelligent Indians and Europeans"; and Schopenhauer quotes a report that Brahmans, conscious of the superiority of their faith, have for the sermons of Christian missionaries only a smile of condescension or a shrug; and he adds:

"To pass over from the eternal Brahm which is present in all things, living in them, suffering in them, and seeking salvation in them, to the belief in a Maker out of nothing is too much for those people. They will never comprehend that the world and man have been fashioned out of naught."—*Par.* II, p. 240.

Bishop Thoburn has told us of his success among the outcasts, and we are deeply impressed with his kind-heartedness. According

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<sup>1</sup> See Schopenhauer *Par.* II, p. 351 and p. 240, cf. also *W. a. W. u.* V. I, p. 421.

to his own statements he is more a philanthropist than a missionary. But granting all his statements, what is the cause of the failure of Christianity among the better classes of civilised nations?

There may be many local causes to prevent the spread of Christianity among the educated, but one applies universally. It is natural that the higher and more advanced a religion is the less accessible are its adherents to those Christian dogmas which are incompatible with science. So long as these dogmas are regarded as the essential element of Christianity, Christian missionaries cannot succeed. When Christian missionaries preach Christ's message of charity and love without the superadded dogmas of ecclesiasticism, they will succeed better.

But there is still another point of view. The value of missions must not be measured from the narrow standpoint of dogmatism. We must not seek their ultimate purpose in converts, but in the enhancement of truth by a propaganda of what we trust to be the truth. Missionaries may preach errors, but if they are only honest they cannot help promoting the cause of truth. The inhabitants of Asia have much to learn from us, and we can benefit them by making them acquainted with our civilisation. But the most important blessing which rests upon missionary work lies in this, that the better knowledge of those whom we contemptuously call pagans broadens our own Christianity, and makes us better Christians than we were before. Our criticism of the paganism in other religions suggests to us the necessity of sweeping before our own doors. Here is an instance of what I mean.

Mr. Spence Hardy, a Christian missionary to Ceylon, is very severe on Buddhism. He says in his book *The Theories and Legends of Buddhists*, dedicated to his converts :

“What Buddha says about his past births and those of others is an imposition upon mankind.”

Spence Hardy argues, If Buddha had lived in those ages of a remote past, he should have mentioned the existence of antediluvian creatures, and he goes so far as to speak of Buddha as “an impostor.” Buddhist patriarchs are censured for representing the



earth as flat. Speaking of the miracles attributed to Buddha he says :

"I deny all that is said about the passing through the air of Buddha and his disciples, or of their being able to visit the Dewa and Brahma worlds."—P. 137.

"These things are too absurd to require serious refutation."—P. 140.

Granting that a belief in miracles is absurd, we ask, why does Mr. Hardy employ two measures? Jesus says: "With the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Mr. Spence Hardy forgets that Christ is in the same predicament with Buddha. Christ claims to have existed before Abraham, yet mentions neither the pterodactyl nor the mammoth. If Buddha's walking on the water is incredible, why is the same story of Christ to be accepted submissively and in blind faith? Buddha's ascent into the Brahma world is ridiculed, but when we read in the Gospel that Christ was carried up into heaven, we must believe, in spite of Copernicus; and as to the belief in the flatness of the earth, Mr. Spence Hardy had better kept his peace, for his converts are likely to hear, sooner or later, the story of Gallileo. There is scarcely any accusation in Spence Hardy's book which is not applicable to Christianity except one, that Buddha is arraigned, strange to say, for his "apparent candor and catholicity" which enable him to see much truth also in the views of his adversaries.

There is a class of Christians who use the acid of scientific critique for the decomposition of the errors of other people, and keep nothing for home consumption—where it is not less needed in the interest of developing that higher religion which would be free from superstitions and a blind submission to the letter.

If Christianity has any rival religion in the world it is Buddhism, the younger but more powerful sister of Jainism—the religion of our friend Gandhi. Exactly on those points concerning which the dogmatism of our churches comes into conflict with science, Buddhism agrees most closely with the theories of modern investigations now generally accepted by the scientific men of Christian countries. Buddhism recognises the rigidity of the law of causation in the moral world not less than in the physical world; it rejects the idea of a creation of the world out of nothing; it repudiates the an-

thropomorphism of the belief in an individual God, and in conformity with the doctrine of evolution, anticipates in all essential details the results of modern psychology as expounded by Ribot, Hering, Wundt, and other European and American scholars. Granted that Buddhism may not overcome Christianity, we cannot deny the fact that it has since the last four or five decades most powerfully affected Western thought. Its influence among us is still on the increase, and we can predict that it will contribute its share to a higher development of our religious views by teaching us a way of reconciling religion with science.

Now, to whom do we owe our knowledge of Buddhism? Mainly to such men as Samuel Beal and Spence Hardy, missionaries who for many years lived among Buddhists and translated their sacred scriptures. They were the pioneers in whose footsteps the more scholarly investigators, such as Weber, Roth, Deussen, Rhys Davids, Richard Garbe, Max Müller, and Oldenberg followed. The missionaries went out in the name of the church militant to destroy rival religions; but in the hands of a higher providence they became the very means of preserving them. They were the chief channels through which Buddhism reached Christian countries, and if Buddhists have been unable to send their missionaries to us, our missionaries did *their* work and can now help us to broaden our religion by the breadth of Buddhism.

Some time ago I met a thoughtful, white-haired lady, with enthusiastic spiritual conceptions, and I noted that her views were touched with a Buddhistic vein. Mentioning to her my observation, she told me that reviewers of her books had actually called her a Buddhist. She added: "And my good old father preached against Gautama!" The lady I refer to is Miss Abby A. Judson, daughter of Adoniram Judson, the first Christian missionary to the Burmese Empire, and translator of the Bible into Burmese.<sup>1</sup> Here is a straw

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<sup>1</sup> It would not be correct to say that Miss Judson is a Buddhist, for she neither is nor calls herself a Buddhist. She states that she disagrees with Buddhism in so far as she does not believe in the doctrine of reincarnation. But this much I am authorised to say, that "the daughter of Adoniram Judson, the first missionary to Burmah, has found that the religion of Buddha is very superior to what is known

in the wind, which proves that missionary work is not lost. There is a deep truth in the Biblical saying: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

Mr. Gandhi has attacked missionaries pretty severely, but he should remember that he himself was a delegate to the World's Parliament of Religions, and delegate is only another name for missionary. He came to this country as a missionary to represent Jainism, to dispel the wrong notions we may have of his religion, and certainly also, to make converts if he can. His work is missionary work, and we thank him for it. We are indebted to him, for we have learned from him and hope that he, too, has been able during his stay in this country to learn from us.

Missions have a broadening influence all around; they broaden the minds of those whom we wish to convert, and what is of still greater consequence to us, they broaden our own minds. But if we are in error, the truth will be attained in the end. Only beware of indifference. The God of Truth is not a partisan, but he respects the truth-loving even if it so happen that they defend errors. We read in the Revelation of St. John:

"I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Summing up, I say, promote missionary work of all honest convictions; preach the truth according to your best comprehension, in modesty, and with tact; not as a partisan who makes his own confession of faith the measure by which he judges other creeds, but as a disciple of Truth, just to his adversaries and always ready to learn, to grow, and to progress. The inevitable result will be a nearer approach to the common ideal of all religions, the religion of truth,—a religion which stands upon the firm ground of a scientifically sound world-conception.

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as Christianity, especially the Pauline and the 'orthodox' phases of it; and that she thinks it unwise to try to engraft the Christian creed on Buddhistic nations, who would do better to return to the original pure teachings given by Buddha himself, and that she considers Buddhism as second only to the purest conception of modern spiritualism," which is the religious view which she holds.